

### ***Requires Terrorists to be Tried as Enemy Combatants, Not Common Criminals***

**Washington, D.C.** – Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) introduced legislation today requiring terrorists to be tried as enemy combatants, not common criminals. Buchanan's bill, the "Military Tribunals for Terrorists Act" will mandate that any terrorist who attacks the United States or its people be interrogated, prosecuted and tried in military court, not civilian court.

"The American people are outraged that foreign terrorists who have declared war on America are being tried in civilian courts," said Buchanan, Florida's only member of the powerful Ways & Means Committee. "Terrorists with ties to known terror organizations such as al Qaeda should not be afforded the same constitutional protections as American citizens, nor should sensitive homeland security and intelligence information be publicized in open, civilian court proceedings."

Buchanan's bill, which he first introduced in the 111th session of Congress, is co-sponsored by three leading national security experts: the Chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Rep. Mike Rogers (R-MI); the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA); the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX).

"Foreign terrorists are just that, foreign citizens who terrorize the United States – not common criminals," said U.S. Rep. Rogers. "They are not entitled to the same rights as U.S. citizens and should be treated as such. Congressman Buchanan's bill ensures that they are treated as enemy combatants who are interrogated for valuable intelligence and tried in military tribunals, not U.S. civilian courts."

McKeon said, "Rep. Buchanan's efforts will make our country safer. Terrorists who are engaged in a war against America must be treated as enemy combatants—not common criminals—and should be prosecuted in accordance with the laws of warfare."

Chairman Smith added: "The first Gitmo detainee trial in civilian courts was a near disaster.

Though Ahmed Ghailani was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies, he was only convicted of one count out of 285 charges. And the case isn't over yet. Because Ghailani was acquitted of terrorism and murder charges, his attorneys will try to overturn the conspiracy verdict on appeal.

"Terrorists are enemy combatants, not common criminals. They commit acts of war against the American people, not crimes. They should be tried at military commissions, not in civilian courts where they have access to the same rights as U.S. citizens. The Military Tribunals for Terrorists Act makes sure that foreign terrorists are tried in military tribunals, not civilian courts. Military tribunals have served the nation well since the Revolutionary War and we should continue to use them."

"Using military tribunals to interrogate, prosecute, and sentence foreign terrorists who conspire, attempt, or attack the United States and its people is a far better way to handle these kinds of sensitive matters," Buchanan said. "Military tribunals protect U.S. intelligence sources and methods from being revealed in open court."

The decision to prosecute these terrorists in civilian court was made by the Attorney General and the Justice Department. Buchanan's bill, the "Military Tribunals for Terrorists Act", would take away the discretion to try terrorists in civilian court and mandate that they always be treated as enemy combatants and brought before a military tribunal.